

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

April 30, 1975

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER
FROM: PETER RODMAN *PR*
SUBJECT: Churchill Quotes

Attached are, per your cryptic instructions, two sets of
extracts from your file of lecture notes:

- Contemporary views of Churchill,
1933-46 (Tab A)
- Arguments for appeasement of Hitler,
1935-39 (Tab B).

Attachments

Contemporary Views of Churchill (1933-1946)

In March 1933, Churchill urged the MacDonald government to forgo its appeals for disarmament and to encourage a strong and allied France on the mainland. The Commons was critical:

Mander: "It seems to me that the right Honorable Gentleman [Churchill] is one of the greatest dangers in the country at the present time. It is, however, unnecessary to consider disarming him, because in the House and in the country he represents a very small body of opinion."

Logan: "...the right Honorable Gentleman the Member for Epping [Churchill] ought to be in a madhouse.... It is a time when in the British House of Commons maniacs should be kept in their proper place, when the peace of Europe is likely to be disturbed by inflammatory language...."

Wallace: "I am bound to say, and I say it deliberately, that the speech which the right Honorable Gentleman [Churchill] made this afternoon reminded me, not of a speech of a statesman, of a man who was willing to help his country, but of a man who had some personal vendetta against the Prime Minister, and indeed, to my mind, it was the speech, very largely, of a disappointed office-seeker."

Cripps: "I am sure that everybody who listened to the right Honorable Member for Epping will think he made a thoroughly mischievous speech. His contributions to these Debates generally seem to come from that angle, and do not seem to us to assist international amity to all."

When Churchill pleaded for increases in the airforce in response to forecasted German increases, the following response was made by Sir Herbert Samuel in the Commons (July, 1934):

"This is rather the language of a Malay running amok than of a responsible British statesman; it is rather the language of blind and causeless panic."

A London Times editorial on November 26, 1934, commented on Churchill's general behaviour in the area of foreign affairs:

"Whether Mr. Churchill really means to persist in this general guerrilla warfare, which has not on the whole gone very well for him, has sometimes appeared in doubt. He has played so conspicuous a part in great imperial affairs in the past that he may yet find himself a more constructive role. But however that may be, let us hope that in both Houses of Parliament the leaders of the opposition will be vigilant to keep the debates on a high level of knowledge and temper. As the cavalry subaltern said of the function of mounted troops in action, it is important to 'give tone to what might otherwise be a mere vulgar brawl.'"

Contemporary Views of Churchill (Continued)

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A New York Times Editorial of December 22, 1934, comments on Churchill's activities and motives:

"Writing in the last number of Collier's, Mr. Winston Churchill expresses the fear that President Roosevelt may lose his leadership. It is a strange choice for such a warning. If anybody is an authority on losing both leadership and confidence, Mr. Churchill is. He is a brilliant writer. His war books and his life of Marlborough bear the mark of high literary quality. Mr. Winston Churchill is also a fine speaker and a formidable debater in the House of Commons. But years ago he ceased to be thought of as a possible Prime Minister. The main reason was that he so readily shifted his party allegiance, and made himself the champion of impossible causes and incredible beliefs. More than once has been applied to him that part of 'The Lost Leader' which speaks of his having left us for a ribbon to stick on his coat. For a ribbon, read reckless ambition, and the story is not far out..

In October, 1938, in the House of Lords, Lord Ponsonby commented on Churchill's abilities:

"I have got the greatest possible admiration for Mr. Churchill's Parliamentary powers, his literary powers, and his artistic powers, but I have always felt that in a crisis he is one of the first people who ought to be interned."

In November, 1936 Churchill reproached Baldwin for not taking a stand for rearmament in the 1935 elections, and for not following a rearmament policy subsequently. Baldwin's reply was:

"....The difference of opinion between Mr. Churchill and myself is in the years 1933 onwards.... Supposing I had gone to the country and said that Germany was rearming, and that we must rearm, does anybody think that this pacific democracy would have rallied to that cry at that moment? I cannot think of anything that would have made the loss of the election, from my point of view, more certain."

After the 1938 Munich agreement Churchill made a broadcast of warning to United States, for which he was scolded by Prime Minister Chamberlain, as follows:

"It is not one of the characteristics of totalitarian States at any rate that they are accustomed to foul their own nests.

Contemporary Views of Churchill (Continued)

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"I strongly deprecate all statements made by persons in responsible or even in irresponsible positions who take opportunities of broadcasting to the world or to other countries in particular that their own country is in a state of decadence."

Even as late as March 1939 he found serious opposition to his behavior over the Munich settlement, as witness this speech by a politician from Churchill's own district:

"Mr. Churchill's post Munich insurrection was shocking. His deplorable broadcast to the U.S.A. was about as helpful to this country as Mr. Lloyd George's writing to the Hearst Press at the time of the General Strike. His castigation of the National Government, which we returned him to support, would in any other party but the Conservative Party have earned his immediate expulsion."

Cripps, July 1934, Commons:

"It is a fallacy, if one is examining the methods by which security can be attained, to start upon the assumption that we get security by an increase of air armaments, or an increase of any form of armaments.... I believe that there can be no other explanation than that it is a change of policy brought about by the pressure of Backbenchers and people like the Right Honorable Gentleman the Member for Epping... He is doing to drive them forward in this mad race. The Government has had its hands forced by the wild men like Mr. Churchill."

Dwight D. Eisenhower, Crusade in Europe (Doubleday, 1948) 194-95

"I could not escape a feeling that Mr. Churchill's views [recommending a strike at the "soft underbelly"] were unconsciously colored by two considerations that lay outside the scope of the immediate military problem. I had nothing tangible to justify such a feeling -- I know, though, that I was not alone in wondering occasionally whether these considerations had some weight with him. The first of them was his concern as a political leader for the future of the Balkans. For this concern I had great sympathy, but as a soldier I was particularly careful to exclude such considerations from my own recommendations. The other was an inner compulsion to vindicate his strategical concepts of World War I, in which he had been the

Contemporary Views of Churchill (Continued)

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principal exponent of the Gallipoli campaign. Many professionals agreed that the Gallipoli affair had failed because of bungling in execution rather than through mistaken calculations of its possibilities. It sometimes seemed that the Prime Minister was determined in the Second War to gain public acceptance of this point of view."

American Reaction to Churchill's Fulton, Missouri Speech (March 5, 1946):

Congressional Reaction:

"Mr. Churchill's proposal would cut the throat of the United Nations Organization. It would destroy the unity of the Big Three, without which the war could not have been won and without which the peace cannot be saved.

"It is shocking to see Mr. Churchill, who rose to power on the repudiation of Chamberlain, align himself with the old Chamberlain Tories who strengthened the Nazis as part of their anti-Soviet crusade."

The three warned the American people against "those would-be political statesmen in our country who are the counterpart to the Chamberlain-Churchill Tory spokesman of Great Britain and not let these American Tories lead us into another war."

A Joint Statement issued on March 6, 1946, by Senators Pepper (Fla.) Kilgore, West Virginia, and Taylor (Idaho).

"I think that it is very unfortunate that a man who made a great record in the war comes out asking for power politics to start lining up again. I am sure that his request will not prevail. We will not have a war with Russia. We will not have to fight her unless we deliberately pick a fight, and we are not going to do that.

"Our common interests with Russia are far greater than any differences we might have....I am sure that the request of the gentleman from England will not prevail in the world. The world wants peace and can only get it by settling its differences across the table, not by power politics."

Rep Savage (Wash.) March 6, 1946

Contemporary Views of Churchill (Continued)

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"Churchill apparently is intent on using the United States as a threat against Russia to stop Russia's march across Europe and into Asia -- and at the same time to arouse the people of the United States to commit this country to the task of preserving the far-flung British Empire."

Senator Capper (Kansas) March 18, 1946

"No greater disservice has been done to America within my recollection than was done by former Prime Minister Churchill at Fulton, Missouri, on March 5 when he had the effrontery to propose in effect that the United States and Britain enter into a military alliance to rule the world. That proposal was an ugly exhibition of power politics and a sinister challenge to the good intentions of America... The ill-advised speech of the former prime minister, made on American soil, proposing that America and Britain join in forming a power bloc, gave our people their first intimate contact with the repulsiveness of power politics. His propaganda has filled America with suspicion and distrust, and has made the path of peace more difficult."

Rep. Ludlow (Indiana) April 3, 1946.

Press Reaction (typical):

"We can agree with Mr. Churchill that there is imperative need of a settlement -- of some assurance. But perhaps this is a two-way street. For anything more than a frantic arms race there is need of assurance on both sides. It is fear and suspicion and cultivated hate that destroys assurance; it is frankness, fairness and adherence to right which builds assurance more than any alliance can. There is room for much more expression of those qualities by Britain and America in support of the United Nations Charter. There is opportunity for much more positive cooperation between them for unselfish and human ends."

"If America ultimately has to choose between a Stalin world and a Churchill world, the result can be in no doubt. But there is a better world. Is there not time still to win it?"

The Christian Science Monitor, March 6, 1946

"So-o-o- -- hdd your hats, boys -- we're off again, hell-bent for a nice rough and tumble with all the 1938-39 build-up by which Roosevelt and Churchill suckered their nations into war against Germany for strictly economic and cash ends while dishing out to the cash customers the somewhat taudry, down-at-the heels argument about a crusade of humanity, 'four freedoms' everywhere in our time, and a general up-chucking of oratorical garbage designed to make the names go ringing down the corridor of time."

John O'Donnell - Washington Times Herald

APPEASEMENT

Atlee, March 1935:

"Let there be no mistake about this [rearmament] White Paper. It marks a complete change of policy... We believe that the policy outlined here is disastrous."

George Hall (later Viscount Hall and Socialist First Lord of the Admiralty) in March 1935:

"There can be no justification for the proposals contained in the White Paper... In our opinion it is madness to assume that more and bigger armaments are required to preserve peace, to give security, and to deter aggression. Let there be no misunderstanding. We, on these Benches, will vote against the service estimates at every stage."

Sir Archibald Sinclair:

"....the folly, danger and wastefulness of this steady accumulation of armaments."

"We on these Benches will feel bound by speech and vote to do all in our power to deflect the Government's policy from its present dangerous and wasteful course."

Greenwood - 1936:

"Herr Hitler's statement ... ought to be accepted at its face value. Herr Hitler made a statement, sinning with one hand and holding out the olive branch with the other, which ought to be taken at its face value. These may prove to be the most important gestures which have yet been made.... It is idle to say that those statements were insincere.... The dominant problem is the problem of peace, and not of defense.... The issue now is whether to resort to increased armaments is in these circumstances the statesmanlike way of dealing with the most grievous problem that ever affected mankind."

George Lansbury - 1937:

"I do not think Herr Hitler will think I am betraying his confidence when I say that almost the first words of our conversation was on that particular point, and I have never heard it said to me more emphatically than Herr Hitler. That another war would mean neither victors nor vanquished but the ruin of everybody.... Both these men [Hitler and Mussolini] want something for their country.... The fundamental thing is that they are as convinced as any other people in the world that another war means collapse and ruin for everybody."

Arthur Henderson - 1937:

"I also agree....in welcoming, so far as Europe is concerned, the attempt of the Government to establish contact with the rulers of Germany. Any attempt to separate the sheep from the goats and to have the world divided into two or more camps based upon ideological differences would be absolutely fatal to the future welfare of the world."

Senator William E. Borah - 1939

"For myself, and for myself only, I want to declare I look upon the present war in Europe as nothing more than another chapter in the bloody volume of European power politics, the balance of power which John Bright, the great commoner of England, once declared was the curse of any possible European peace. Yes, it is power politics....

"If our boys go to Europe they will not go to Europe to wipe out Nazi-ism; they will go to Europe to adjust territory, to pass upon the question of power, and when the war is over that will happen which happened after the World War -- the representatives of the European nations will sit down together and, forgetting every principle for which the American boys died, they will pass solely upon the question of power politics.

"What is going on now in Europe? Is it anything more than a controversy over territory, over power? We are being asked to approach, and come nearer, step-by-step, to just such wars as have one on in Europe from the Spanish succession to the present hour."

Senator Robert A. La Follette, Jr. - 1939 :

"I am firmly convinced that our great opportunity for service to the cause of civilization is to stay out of this war, to stay all the way out of the war. Thus, we can preserve in this hemisphere a haven of sanity in a world where madness now prevails. We can then concentrate on our own problems and prove that democracy can work in a modern economic environment. When the war is over we will then indeed be in a position to give the world succor and leadership. We demonstrated the soundness of our way of life. War-weary and disillusioned people will see in our example the way to rehabilitate civilization in their own lands.

" But if we become involved we will be in no position to help anyone, not even ourselves. "

Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh - 1939 :

"And if Europe is prostrated again by war, as she has been so often in the past, then the greatest hope for our Western civilization lies in America. By staying out of war ourselves, we may even bring peace to Europe more quickly. Let us look to our own defences and to our own character. If we attend them, we have no need to fear what happens elsewhere. If we do not attend to them, nothing can save us.

"If war brings more Dark Ages to Europe, we can better preserve those things which we love, and which we mourn the passing of in Europe today by preserving them here, by strengthening them here, rather than by hurling ourselves thoughtlessly to their defense over there and thus destroying all in the conflagration. "